Tips for Writing a Thesis Statement

An effective thesis statement tells readers specifically what you plan to write about in your paper. It also serves as a personal guide to keep you on track as you research your subject.

**The Process at Work**

A thesis statement usually takes a stand or expresses a specific feeling or feature of your subject. Write as many versions as it takes to hit upon the one that sets the right tone for your writing. The following formula can be used to form your thesis statement:

**A specific subject** *(The Crucible)*

**+ a particular stand, feeling, or feature** *(uses the Salem witch trails and McCarthyism as inspiration to critique social injustices in society.)*

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**= an effective thesis statement.**

**Sample Thesis Statements**

Writing Assignment: Research paper about a social issue

Specific Subject: Homeless people

Thesis Statement: Who are the homeless **(subject)**, and what the reasons for their predicament **(specific feature)**?

Writing Assignment: Research paper about human growth and development

Specific Subject: Personality traits

Thesis Statement: Certain personality traits **(subject)** are shaped primarily by a person’s peer group **(specific stand)**?

Writing Assignment: Extended analysis of a novel

Specific Subject: Frankenstein by Mary Shelley

Thesis Statement: Mary Shelley’s novel Frankenstein **(subject)** focuses on the theme of friendship **(specific feature)**.

**Thesis Checklist**

Make sure that your thesis statement…

\_\_\_\_\_ identifies a limited, specific subject,

\_\_\_\_\_ focuses on a particular feature or feeling about the subject,

\_\_\_\_\_ is stated in a clear, direct sentence (or sentences),

\_\_\_\_\_ can be supported with convincing facts and details, and

\_\_\_\_\_ meets the requirements or the assignment.